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**MAYOR DE BLASIO'S ZERO WASTE CHALLENGE HELPS BUSINESS
DRAMATICALLY REDUCE WASTE**

Part of administration's OneNYC commitment to send zero waste to landfill by 2030; participants have already diverted nearly 13,000 tons, including composting over 4,000 tons of waste

Challenge requires leftover edible food to be donated; 107 tons already provided to New Yorkers in need

NEW YORK—Mayor de Blasio today announced the Mayor's Zero Waste Challenge, through which 31 businesses across all five boroughs are dramatically reducing waste. The Zero Waste Challenge is part of the administration's comprehensive OneNYC plan to send Zero Waste to landfill by 2030. Participants include some of New York City's most iconic businesses from a variety of sectors, such as ABC/Disney, Barclays Center, Citi Field, Le Bernardin, Whole Foods and many more.

"Our Zero Waste Challenge participants are leaders in their industries – and now they're also leaders in sustainability," said **Mayor de Blasio**. "In OneNYC, we made a major commitment to sending Zero Waste to landfill by 2030. We're doing what we can to make recycling and composting as accessible as possible to New Yorkers, but everyone will need to do their part to make a more sustainable New York City a reality. These businesses are leading the way."

Since the Challenge started earlier this year, participants have already diverted nearly 13,000 tons of waste from landfill and incineration (including composting over 4,000 tons), through tactics such as modifying purchase practices, reducing packaging, and switching to reusable materials or digital storage. For example, some participants have stocked their offices with reusable coffee mugs or glasses in lieu of disposable cups and bottled water; another did away with filing cabinets and moved to a digital storage system.

The Challenge also requires any participant that regularly has leftover edible food to donate that food to a food collection organization such as City Harvest or Rock and Wrap it Up!, to ensure the food can be used at shelters or food pantries for hungry New Yorkers.

The average diversion rate of all Challenge participants is 60 percent.

This Zero Waste Challenge comes ahead of the new commercial organics law which will require certain subsets of businesses to source separate food scraps and other organic material for beneficial use in 2017, as well as new commercial recycling rules that simplify the City's current commercial recycling rules, making them easier for businesses to follow. Under these new Department of Sanitation rules, all businesses must recycle *all* recyclable materials.

“New Yorkers are already stepping up efforts at home to reach our Zero Waste goal,” said **Nilda Mesa, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability**. “With the Mayor’s Zero Waste Challenge, the new commercial recycling rules and other commercial waste initiatives, we aim to achieve similar results from our commercial waste stream. We have been pleased that in just a few months, Challenge participants have succeeded in cutting their waste dramatically. Through this Challenge we are learning even more about what it will take to meet our Zero Waste goals.”

"New York City's businesses are a key part of our goal of sending zero waste to landfills by 2030," said **Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia**. "The businesses participating in this challenge are at the forefront of the industry and have taken great steps to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste. I am excited about the results that the participants have achieved so far. These businesses can be role models for others looking to comply with the City's recycling laws and help us achieve our zero waste goals."

Businesses participating in the Zero Waste Challenge come from a variety of sectors, including sports arenas and stadiums; commercial tenants and building owners; food wholesalers, grocers and caterers; schools; hotels; restaurants; and TV productions. Participants include ABC/Disney, Anheuser-Busch, AppNexus, Barclays Center, Citi Field, Cleaver Co., COOKFOX Architects with landlord SL Green, D’Arrigo Brothers, Dig Inn Seasonal Market (1 location), The Durst Organization (8 buildings), EPA Region 2 office (GSA Building), Etsy, Great Performances Catering, Hilton Garden Inn Staten Island, Hyatt Place Flushing, Katzman Produce, Le Bernardin Restaurant, Le Pain Quotidien at 10 5th Avenue, Madame Secretary (Eye Productions Inc.), Martha Washington Hotel, Momofuku (Brooklyn location), NRDC, RXR’s Starrett-Lehigh Building, sweetgreen (2937 Broadway), The New School, The Peninsula, The Pierre, The Waldorf, Top Banana, Viacom with landlord SL Green, and Whole Foods (Chelsea and Upper East Side locations.)

To successfully complete the Challenge, each participant has committed to divert at least 50% of their waste from landfill and incineration by the end of the Challenge. Participants are further challenged to step up their efforts and divert 75 percent – and ultimately 90 percent – of waste, if possible; however these higher levels of diversion are not required to complete the Challenge. Diversion of waste from landfill and incineration can be achieved in many ways, including by purchasing less and more efficiently, using reusable materials whenever possible, donating all edible food to feed hungry New Yorkers, separating food scraps for composting or other beneficial use and separating recyclables for recycling. Specific goals include:

- Reaching 50 percent of waste diverted from landfill and incineration
- Reaching 75 percent of waste diverted from landfill and incineration
- Reaching 90 percent of waste diverted from landfill and incineration

- Greatest overall waste diversion rate from landfill and incineration
- Greatest amount of food donated to local charities and organizations to feed hungry New Yorkers
- Greatest overall waste diversion rate from landfill and incineration by category of business
- Most successful or innovative source reduction effort

The Challenge kicked off earlier this year and will run through mid-June 2016.

“The EPA is proud to take part in Mayor de Blasio’s Zero Waste Challenge, which invites food wholesalers and manufacturers, food service establishments and other businesses to match the City’s zero waste goals,” said **EPA Regional Administrator, Judith A. Enck**. “By participating in this ambitious program, the EPA is reducing the amount of waste that is sent to landfills and incinerators, and encouraging others to do the same.”

"We must challenge ourselves to leave our children and grandchildren a natural environment more beautiful than we found it," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**. "To create a greener earth, we must expand participation in recycling programs such as the Zero Waste Challenge that have the potential to dramatically reduce the amount of waste we send to our landfills."

"Reducing waste in our city is a cause that will require everyone's active participation – residents, landlords, government and especially businesses," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. "Any program aimed at mainstreaming lower-waste business practices will help us achieve the goal of zero waste sent to landfills by 2030."

Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection, said, "The Zero Waste Challenge is helping our businesses take responsible steps toward helping our city meet our goal of reducing carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050. Producing less waste and donating food to those in need are sustainable habits that also save money for businesses and our city. The Challenge shows that it takes the cooperation of all sectors to combat climate change in meaningful ways. I commend Mayor de Blasio for his bold vision on this issue."

Council Member Antonio Reynoso, Chair of the Sanitation and Solid Waste Management Committee said, "This is an exciting program, and I would like to congratulate all the businesses that have stepped up to participate. They will be sending a message to the rest of the city that dramatically reducing waste sent to landfills is not only possible, it can be easy with a few small changes to their practices. I look forward to seeing many more businesses follow their example."

City Council Minority Leader Steven Matteo said, “Having grown up in the shadow of the world's largest landfill, many Staten Islanders know firsthand the profound impact that hazardous waste can have on the environment and on people's lives. That is one reason why I have always supported reducing the amount of waste we create and improving recycling rates, working closely with the administration to create an electronic waste collection program, to aggressively clean up litter and to curb illegal dumping. By partnering with businesses and

providing incentives, the Zero Waste Challenge is another great way to promote these efforts and achieve these goals."

"If we are going to achieve the city's goal of reaching zero waste by 2030, we will need the help of big businesses, which is why it is great to see so many iconic businesses participating in the Zero Waste Challenge," said **Council Member Donovan Richards**. "Separating food waste and using reusable materials is important for all New Yorkers, but to truly make a dent, we must partner with the largest contributors of leftover waste. I'd like to thank Mayor de Blasio and all 31 businesses for working together to achieve the necessary goal of making our city more sustainable."

"City Harvest is proud to be a recipient of Mayor de Blasio's Zero Waste Challenge," said **Jilly Stephens, Executive Director of City Harvest**. "Since we pioneered food rescue in 1982, City Harvest has collected over 545 million pounds of excess food and delivered it to hundreds of community feeding programs across the five boroughs. Today, nearly 1.4 million residents struggle to put meals on their tables regularly, and recovering excess food is a practical way to feed hungry New Yorkers and reduce food waste at the same time. In fact, through our food rescue work, we have prevented over 500,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas from being produced – which is the equivalent of taking 100,000 cars off the road for a year."

Syd Mandelbaum, MA, MBA CEO, and Founder Rock and Wrap It Up! Said, "Rock and Wrap It Up!'s life's blood is food donation and has been for 26 years. We highlight the equivalency of food recovery and carbon footprint reduction by less GHG being generated. The Mayor's Zero Waste Challenge helps us increase donations and reward our partners, while feeding so many more who hunger."

"Disney/ABC Inc. has very much enjoyed participating in the Mayor's Zero Waste Challenge," said **Peter Perillo, Facility Services & Support, Disney/ABC Inc.** "Sustainability and environmental awareness have always been key priorities for our organization, and the Zero Waste Challenge has been a great opportunity to work with other like-minded organizations. This experience has certainly inspired our team to concentrate more effort into implementing new approaches towards becoming a zero waste operation."

"The Zero Waste Challenge has encouraged me to find creative ways to get our large office to limit their landfill-bound waste both by educating them about how to sort properly, and by limiting their trashcan options," said **Lanie Klompus, Senior Facilities Specialist at Global Office Operations, AppNexus**.

"Citi Field and the New York Mets are committed to a sustainable future, and are pleased to participate in the Mayor's Zero Waste Challenge," said **Citi Field Vice President of Ballpark Operations Sue Lucchi**. "We are enthusiastic about tackling the food waste issues with all our partners and remain very excited that this initiative will help feed many New Yorkers in need."

"Our commitment to sustainability goes beyond how we deal with waste," said **Taylor Lanzet, Sustainability Coordinator at Dig Inn**. "Dig Inn menus are planned around ingredients often left discarded in the field. For generations, we've harvested broccoli and ignored the leaf. The

thought process behind our spring dish, Broccoli Leaf with Parmesan, is threefold: it tastes amazing, provides another source of revenue for producers, and cuts waste at the farm level."

"As both a landlord who collects waste, recyclables and compostables, and the operator of an organic composting facility we understand the importance of increasing our diversion rates from a multitude of perspectives, said **Helena Durst, Chief Administrative Officer of the Durst Organization**. "We applaud the Mayor's Office for their leadership and look forward to working with our tenants and partners to drive up diversion rates and make New York and our planet more verdant."

"For over 100 years, Katzman Produce has been a friend of the farmer while helping feed New Yorkers," said **Jason Gilweski of Katzman Produce**. "Participation in the Zero Waste Challenge further solidifies our commitment to sustainability."

"The Mayor's Zero Waste Challenge is aligned with efforts that the Hilton Garden Inn Staten Island had already worked toward with both our haulers and our on-property processes," said **Lois Nicotra, Owner of the Hilton Garden Inn**. "To have the Mayor's Office of Sustainability guiding and supporting our efforts is helpful and validating. We want the best for our guests, not only while they are dining with us, but also as we coexist in the Staten Island community. We're Staten Islanders first, and the Zero Waste Challenge is a daily effort for us because it's about being a good neighbor; our team treats every day like Earth Day."

"Whether finding new life for craft supplies or building our employee community by volunteering at our local composting farm, reducing our waste footprint is deeply embedded in Etsy's history and culture. We are so excited to continue our journey towards zero waste alongside other sustainable NY companies as part of the Mayor's Zero Waste Challenge," said **James Ossman, Global Operations Manager of Etsy**.

"The Zero Waste Challenge is good for everybody. I'm lucky that in New York we have many organizations that help people in need. City Harvest rescues food that is perfectly fresh and nutritious and distributes to 600 shelters in New York as well as create mobile markets in the Bronx and Staten Island and other parts of the city. New York has almost 1.4 million people living under poverty level that are struggling to find their next meal and this year, City Harvest will rescue 55 million pounds in excess food that would otherwise go to waste," said **Chef Eric Ripert of Le Bernardin**.

"Mayor de Blasio's admirable goal to slash the amount of waste sent to landfills by 2030 will help reduce the city's global warming emissions. And today's announcement shows that there are business leaders who recognize that reducing the amount of waste their organizations generate makes economic sense as well," said **Eric A. Goldstein, NYC Environment Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council**.

"As part of our company's Green Mission, Whole Foods Market places a large emphasis on managing waste, so participating in the Mayor's Zero Waste Challenge was a natural partnership," said **Kylie Sale, Green Mission Specialist for Whole Foods Market's Northeast**

Region. "This challenge will help us to share and to strengthen our sustainability efforts as we strive to divert even more of our waste through reusing, donating, composting, and recycling."

"Participating in the Mayor's Zero Waste Challenge has been a great experience for the Starrett-Lehigh Building," commented **Mitchell Grant, Operations Manager for RXR Realty**. "As we work to become more mindful members of our community, the Challenge has provided the necessary direction and support to help us reach our goals and better execute projects that make our buildings more sustainable."

"SL Green is very pleased to be a part of this groundbreaking initiative. We will navigate best practices to set a precedent for others in our industry and continue to focus on our market leading sustainability program," said **Edward V. Piccinich, Executive Vice President and Director of Management & Construction at SL Green**. "It is critical to preemptively align our waste strategy with relevant City goals and regulations."

"New York City is pulling us away from the plastics and food waste precipice. The Zero Waste Challenge is exactly the direction we must go, getting waste out of our waterways and litter out of the landfills, and consuming food more efficiently. We cannot keep wasting more than 1.3 billion metric tons of edible food each year, as the carbon footprint of this wastefulness is staggering: 3.3 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions, or about 7 percent of total global emissions. In fact, if food waste were a nation, it'd be one of the largest greenhouse gas emitters. Worse, wasted food worldwide totals \$750 billion in annual economic loss. The good news is that 1 percent reduction in food loss could yield global gains of \$40 million each year. And that's the path that New York City is pursuing with the Zero Waste Challenge: one that's right for the planet and right for the New York City taxpayer pocketbook. Simply put, by preventing plastic waste and preventing food waste we prevent financial waste," said **Michael Shank, Head of Communications at UN SDSN**.

"UPROSE applauds the Administration's effort to creatively raise awareness and challenge our City to move towards zero waste. Waste is not only killing our oceans, it is a public health threat for low income communities of color that are the reluctant hosts to the most polluting infrastructure- zero waste is necessary for the climate and for environmental justice," said **Elizabeth Yeampierre, Executive Director of UPROSE**.

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